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# Terrorism Review

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25 February 1988

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Terrorism Review **b3**

25 February 1988

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This review is published biweekly by the Directorate of Intelligence. Other elements of the CIA as well as other agencies of the US Intelligence Community are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Executive Editor [REDACTED] **b3**

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## Terrorism Review <sup>b3</sup>

25 February 1988

### Focus

#### International Terrorism in 1987: What Do the Numbers Say? <sup>b3</sup>

<sup>b1, b3</sup>  
Fewer dramatic terrorist attacks occurred in 1987 compared with the two previous years, but the number of terrorist incidents increased slightly. The level of international terrorist activity in 1987 rose by more than 7 percent over the previous year, reaching 832 incidents compared with 774 for 1986.

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Terrorist incidents in 1987 resulted in 612 persons killed and 2,293 wounded, including casualties to terrorists themselves. Again, this increase over the figures for 1986—604 and 1,717 respectively—can be explained by the explosion of terrorism in Pakistan. Without the statistics for Pakistan, the rest of the world shows a drop of more than 100 killed and 200 wounded from the 1986 figures.

The United States remained a major target for international terrorists, although the total number of anti-US incidents declined by 26 percent to 151 in 1987. The decrease does not reflect any particular trend but is consistent with the numerical decline in other categories elsewhere. US casualties also dropped by about 50 percent. The greatest number of US casualties took place in Latin America, where they declined slightly. More US citizens were killed or wounded in Asia, and the casualty figures for the Middle East and Western Europe remained at virtually the same percentages as in 1986. The United States undoubtedly will remain a prime target, and we believe that the incidence of anti-US attacks will increase as terrorist groups adjust to recently developed countermeasures. <sup>b3</sup>

Terrorist attacks followed the same general patterns as in preceding years. Bombings remained the means preferred over all others, followed by arson and armed attacks. More than half the kidnappings occurred in the Middle East. Although few in number, their impact outweighed that of most other terrorist events of the year. Iranian-inspired terrorists will probably continue to view kidnappings and the subsequent holding of hostages as effective means of achieving their objectives as long as Western governments are willing to make concessions. A Korean diplomat, a German businessman, and two French hostages were released in 1987, but more were kidnaped. Four Americans, an Indian professor, two Germans, and British hostage negotiator Terry Waite were seized last year. <sup>b3</sup>

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Although this attack fell outside our definition of terrorism because the target was

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**Table 1**  
**International Terrorist Incidents**  
**Against US Targets in 1987**  
**by Type of Event and Region**

	Africa	Asia	Latin America	Middle East	Western Europe	Total
Total	5	25	71	14	36	151
Armed attack/ assaults	1	8	9	2	8	28
Arson			7	3	2	12
Barricade, no hostage					1	1
Bombing	2	14	50	7	24	97
Kidnaping	2		1	2		5
Nonair hijacking		1				1
Other			1			1
Sabotage/ vandalism		1	3		1	5
Theft		1				1

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military, it was conducted by a dangerous terrorist group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, and is an interesting example of terrorists' ability to innovate.

State support for international terrorism persisted. Countries that sponsor terrorism try to hide their involvement through use of proxies and other means. When such attacks have been identified by perpetrators, however, the number of state-sponsored international terrorist incidents increased 60 percent over 1986, to 188 attacks in 1987. The most significant change occurred in Pakistan, where the level of international terrorist attacks sponsored by Afghanistan rose from 29 in 1986 to 128 in 1987—an increase of 340 percent. Another important increase was in Iranian-sponsored terrorism: 44 incidents, representing a 30-percent increase over 1986. Conversely, international terrorism sponsored by the two countries most subjected to international pressure, Libya and Syria, declined significantly: Libyan-sponsored terrorism dropped from 19 attacks in 1986 to only six in 1987, and we recorded only two for Syria in 1987.

#### Middle East

The year was marked by the absence of major terrorist spectacles by Middle Eastern groups, for several reasons:

- Physical security at potential official and nonofficial targets in Europe and the Middle East helped frustrate terrorist planning.
- Enhanced counterterrorist cooperation between Western nations and others afflicted by the problem kept terrorists off balance.

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- Well-publicized revelations of Syrian complicity in sponsoring terrorism, combined with its badly deteriorating economy, compelled Damascus to diminish its support for international terrorist groups.
- Although Libya was active in international terrorism during the year, it continued to exercise the caution it demonstrated in 1986 following the US air raids and other US and European sanctions.
- Finally, events in Lebanon—such as the camp wars and the Syrian military move into Beirut early in the year—compelled the attention of international terrorist groups operating in and out of Lebanon and inhibited their ability to carry out attacks overseas.

Middle Eastern origin terrorism, nevertheless, continues to account for about half of all terrorist incidents worldwide. In 1987 there were 371 incidents in the region, with 43 attacks of Middle Eastern origin in Western Europe. In 1987 we detected a drop in international terrorism overseas by radical Palestinian groups, but this decrease was offset by a rise in attacks against Israeli targets in Israel and the occupied territories.

Table 2  
Total Casualties in International Terrorist  
Incidents in 1987 by Region

	Wounded	Dead
Total	2,293	612
Africa	136	49
Asia	1,231	247
Eastern Europe	4	3
Latin America	69	11
Middle East	722	276
Western Europe	131	26

We do not believe that Palestinian radicals have forsaken terrorism as a means of achieving their objectives. Several radical Palestinian groups already may be priming themselves for a resurgence of terrorist activity against Israeli, moderate Arab, and US targets both within and beyond the Middle East. Given the extent of restlessness among young Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, combined with the influence of Islamic fundamentalism, we are concerned new leadership and groupings might emerge from the turmoil to bring about a new wave of terrorism. Furthermore, any new international attempt to reach a peace agreement in the region could also result in increased terrorism; moderate Arab leaders willing to try to negotiate or compromise with Israel will probably become routine targets for terrorist assassination.

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#### Asia

Asia can no longer be considered a region relatively free from the dangers of international terrorism. The number of international incidents in Asia in 1987 grew by 80 percent over 1986, to a total of 173. Pakistan suffered the most dramatic increase; if incidents in Pakistan were excluded, however, the figures for the rest of Asia would remain virtually the same for 1986 and 1987. (b3)

Table 3  
International Terrorist Incidents in 1987  
by Type of Event and Region

	Africa	Asia	Eastern Europe	Latin America	Middle East	Western Europe	Total
Total	29	173	1	108	371	150	832
Armed attack/assaults	9	18		14	67	33	141
Arson	1	1		11	122	15	150
Barricade						4	4
Bombing	10	148		69	151	95	473
Kidnaping	8	3	1	10	30	1	53
Nonair hijacking		1			1		2
Other				1			1
Sabotage/vandalism		1		3		2	6
Terrorist skyjack	1						1
Theft		1					1

In a world accustomed to terrorist atrocities in the Middle East and Europe, only a major incident in the past—like the 1983 Rangoon bombing by North Korean agents or the 1985 downing of the Air India airliner by radical Sikhs—attracted worldwide attention. In 1988, several developments already pose serious problems for the international community. In addition to terrorism in Pakistan, increased threats will arise from insurgencies in the Philippines, India, and Sri Lanka; the reemergence of the Japanese Red Army (JRA); terrorist activities of North Korean Government agents; and the tempting target presented by the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul. (b3)

#### Western Europe

Terrorists in Western Europe, both domestic and Middle Eastern, staged 151 international terrorist attacks in 1987—a slight drop from 1986. Twenty-four percent were staged against US interests, mostly bombings of US-owned or US-associated facilities. US casualty figures in Western Europe were low: one person killed and 36 wounded. Some indigenous groups, such as Action Directe in France, were decimated by arrests; others, such as West Germany's Red Army Faction, were largely inactive. Separatist terrorism remained by far the most persistent and dangerous, and we fear that this trend will continue, given the intensity of emotions and the degree of at least some community support for Basques, Kurds, and Irish separatism. (b3)

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The reasons for the overall decline in Western Europe, which has persisted for two years, are similar to those attributed earlier to the lull in major Middle Eastern attacks: caution exercised by state sponsors of terrorism, leading to a major decrease in Middle Eastern-origin terrorism; enhanced physical security; and successes by law enforcement and security agencies, owing largely to the increased level of cooperation among counterterrorist officials in Western Europe. We believe most countries in the region no longer look upon terrorism as an isolated phenomenon to be handled separately by each state and independently of other aspects of foreign policy. Most governments now believe that it is a shared problem and that "one democracy's terrorist is another democracy's terrorist." b3

#### Latin America

The incidence of international terrorism in Latin America dropped by 32 percent in 1987, down from 159 incidents in 1986 to 108 in 1987. As in the past two years, Peru, Colombia, and Chile suffered the greatest number of international terrorist attacks, accounting for nearly three quarters of the attacks in Latin America. The year also saw an increase in attacks in the Dominican Republic, although they were minor. Attacks in El Salvador and Honduras were once again inconsequential, and more occurred in Guatemala. b3

The United States remained a major target. Of the 108 incidents, 71 were directed against US interests, a figure that represented 47 percent of all anti-US attacks throughout the world. Although the attacks resulted in substantial property damage, they caused no deaths of US citizens and only seven wounded. Although most attacks were against established regimes, the United States was also a target because of its substantial economic presence and political influence in Latin America and its symbolic position as the engine of capitalism. b3

#### Sub-Saharan Africa

Consistent with previous years, international terrorist incidents in Sub-Saharan Africa remained few and of little significance. We detected no significant trend in the slight increase in the number of such attacks. Attacks occurred in 14 countries, and only Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Mozambique saw three or more attacks. Once again, almost all attacks were committed within the framework of local insurgencies, in which foreigners were sometimes deliberate targets but mostly inadvertent victims or targets of opportunity. b3

Only five terrorist attacks were aimed at US interests, resulting in two deaths and one injury, and of these only one—a Libyan-sponsored bombing in Chad in October—appeared to be deliberate. Four US citizens were kidnaped in two separate incidents in Mozambique and Sudan, but they were released unharmed within a few months. One US tourist was wounded in a landmine explosion along the South African border. b3

The number of kidnappings was unusually high in comparison with other regions. Seven different insurgent groups kidnaped foreigners to gain publicity or extract ransom for their cause. More than 100 foreigners of 11 nationalities were abducted during the year; most, however, were later released. b3

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## Highlights (U)

### Alert Items

#### El Salvador

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#### Leftists Intensify Targeting of US Personnel

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[REDACTED]

#### Italy

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[REDACTED]

### Significant Developments

#### Western Europe

##### Cyprus

#### PLO Officials Killed in Cyprus

For the first time since July 1987, Palestinians in Europe were victims of a terrorist attack. On 14 February in Limassol, Cyprus, a powerful car bomb killed three PLO officials. One day later a bomb exploded aboard the Greek ship Sol Phryne, which was chartered to carry Palestinian deportees, sympathizers, and journalists from Cyprus to Israel. The PLO quickly blamed the Israeli Mossad for both operations and vowed to retaliate. In light of the two attacks, the PLO claimed it would reconsider its commitment to the November 1985 Cairo

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<sup>b3</sup>  
Declaration banning terrorism outside Israel and the occupied territories; however, [REDACTED] the threat has been withdrawn. Israeli authorities denied the PLO allegations and blamed feuding PLO factions for the car bomb attack. [REDACTED]

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France

#### Action Directe Hunger Strike

Imprisoned Action Directe (AD) leaders—Jean-Marc Rouillan, Nathalie Menigon, Joelle Aubron, and Georges Cipriani—are near death. The four have been on a hunger strike since 1 December, demanding to be treated as political prisoners and to be removed from isolation. A special terrorism tribunal passed sentence on the four in mid-February. The rest of the 22 AD members on trial received penalties ranging from an 18-month suspended sentence for journalists Paula Jacques and Dan Franck, who harbored a fugitive, to eight years for Hellette Besse, who supplied false documents. The four leaders are supposed to go on trial again in March for assassination, bombing, and armed robbery. [REDACTED]

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Should one or more of the prisoners die, the government anticipates more violent sympathetic actions—such as bombings and arson—than those seen to date. AD sympathizers in West Germany have carried out low-key actions in Frankfurt and Hamburg, and six jailed RAF members went on short hunger strikes to show solidarity with the French terrorists. Lack of a significant response would probably cause the groups—AD, the Communist Combatant Cells in Belgium, and the Red Army Faction in West Germany—to lose credibility with the support network of radical leftists and other terrorists. [REDACTED]

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Ireland

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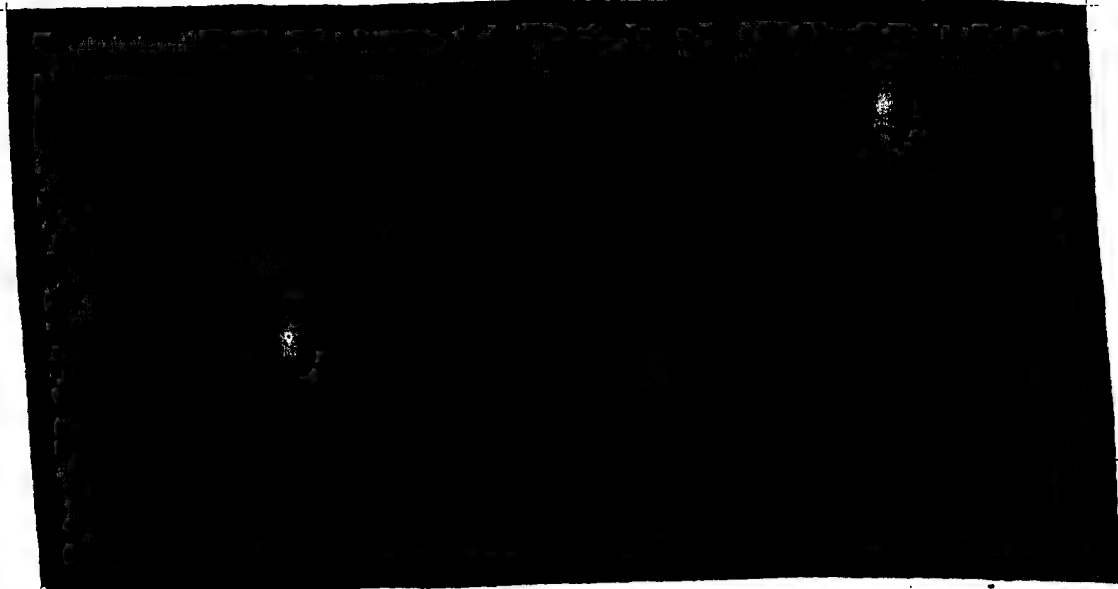
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#### Middle East

#### Lebanon

##### Three New Hostages

Hizballah is believed to be behind the kidnaping on 17 February of US Marine Lieutenant Colonel Higgins in southern Lebanon. The kidnaping, claimed by the Islamic Revolutionary Brigades and the Organization of the Oppressed on Earth, was justified as the seizing of a US spy. The Shia Amal militia is searching the area in which the incident occurred in an effort to free Higgins. b3

Masked gunmen kidnaped two United Nations Refugee Welfare Agency (UNRWA) employees—Jan Stening, a Swede, and Norwegian William Joergensen—on 5 February in Sidon, Lebanon. Several groups are suspected, although

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there has been no claim of responsibility. [REDACTED] UNRWA recently had fired six Palestinian employees after making accusations, based on an investigation by Stening, that they had stolen supplies. UNRWA later publicly claimed it did not fire any workers, however.

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We have been unable to confirm the identities of the kidnapers. It is possible that disgruntled Palestinian employees of UNRWA abducted the two Scandinavians and may be receiving protection from sympathizers in the Sidon area. An UNRWA spokesman declared publicly that it was an internal Palestinian affair, but an anonymous note received in Beirut several days after the abduction claimed the UNRWA employees were spies who would be interrogated and set free only if found innocent. The tactic of declaring hostages spies previously had been used by radical Shia to "legitimize" kidnappings.

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#### Palestinians

#### Terrorists' Views on West Bank Situation

Resumption of an active peace process probably would lead to an upsurge in Palestinian terrorism, including attacks outside the Middle East. Opposition to political resolution of the Arab-Israeli dispute—and specifically to the Amman accords—was a major cause of the unprecedented number of Palestinian terrorist incidents in 1985. The loss of momentum in the peace process almost certainly has been a major factor in the lull in Palestinian attacks outside the Middle East since late 1986. State sponsors of radical Palestinian factions—including Libya and Syria—could be expected to encourage attacks against any Arab parties entering into negotiations with Israel.

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#### Latin America

#### El Salvador

#### FMLN Attacks on Embassy Vehicles

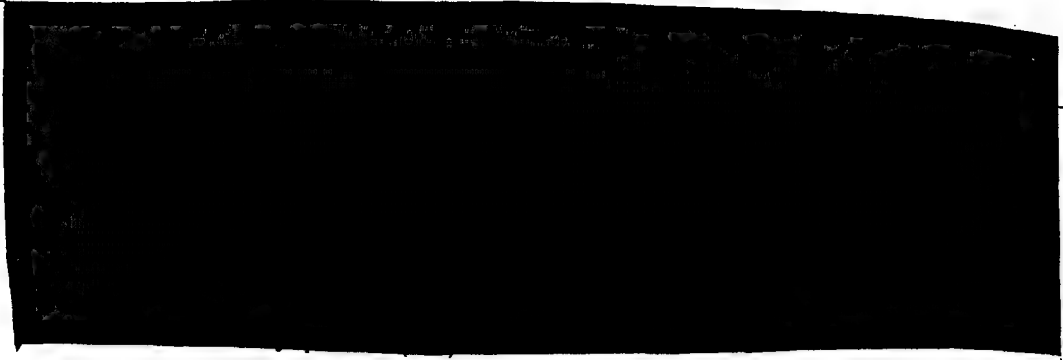
Since November 1987, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) has increased terrorist tactics to intimidate Salvadorans working for the US Embassy. A driver assigned to the US defense attache office was abducted from a

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service station and shot on 12 November. A month after the assassination, [REDACTED] b3  
[REDACTED] an anonymous telephone threat that more Salvadoran employees would be killed in the same manner. On 14 January, FMLN members hijacked the vehicle of a Salvadoran employee of USAID while he was stopped at a traffic light in San Salvador. Later the same day, two terrorists in the stolen vehicle fired automatic weapons at a patrol car belonging to the US Embassy's contract guard company. On 12 February, one of two FMLN members in a stolen vehicle fired a revolver at a patrol car belonging to the US Embassy's contract guard company. b3

South/East Asia



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## Iranian Support for Terrorism in 1987

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Iran in 1987 increased its involvement in international terrorism. Beginning in early January, Tehran or its surrogates:

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- Were accused by Paris of instigating the 1986 bombing campaign and of giving support to a cell of North African terrorists arrested in March.
- Allegedly ordered the kidnaping in Lebanon of US journalist Charles Glass.
- Benefited from the release of foreign hostages held in Lebanon by Hizballah, the fast-growing Iranian-backed Shia fundamentalist movement in Lebanon.

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- Murdered Iranian defectors and dissidents in West Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Turkey.

Iranian leaders view terrorism as an important instrument of foreign policy, which in 1987 they were willing to use to advance national goals and to export the regime's Islamic revolutionary ideals. They used it selectively and skillfully in coordination with conventional diplomacy and military tactics. Most Iranian leaders probably agree terrorism is an acceptable policy option, although they may differ on the appropriateness or timeliness of a particular act of terrorism.

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Iran's primary targets were the moderate Arab regimes, the West, and Iranian dissidents. Tehran used terrorism to try to intimidate Persian Gulf rulers into ending their aid to Baghdad, to drive US and French influence from the Middle East, and to eliminate opponents of the regime. In 1987 Tehran used the threat of terrorism, along with attacks on Gulf shipping, to discourage Kuwait and the other moderate Arab Gulf states from supporting the US reflagging effort.

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## Targeting the Gulf States

Tehran continued its policy of recruiting Shias from the Persian Gulf states.

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Although some acts of terrorism by Shias in the Gulf may have been conducted without Tehran's explicit authorization, Tehran encourages such acts in principle and can call on these extremists to mount terrorist operations. Iranian-backed factions include the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the Organization of the Islamic Revolution in the Arabian Peninsula, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, and the Islamic Call (Dawa) Party, which has branches in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Lebanon.

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Iran's campaign against the Persian Gulf states began in June 1986 when Kuwaiti Shias were involved in the bombing of several oil installations in Kuwait. In January 1987, Shia terrorists carried out a series of bombings at Kuwaiti oil installations apparently intended to force cancellation or postponement of the Organization of Islamic States summit conference and to end Kuwaiti support for Iraq. The attacks were claimed in the name of the Prophet Muhammad's Forces in Kuwait—Revolutionary Organization, a previously unknown group, which probably was simply a covername used by Shia extremists. More bombings—probably intended to intimidate Kuwait from supporting the US reflagging effort—occurred in April and May 1987. In July, two Kuwaiti brothers blew themselves up while attempting to place a bomb in front of a commercial building housing the Air France ticket office. The brothers told authorities in late 1986 they had been abducted by Iran, but they had received sabotage training there. In September, arsonists set a fire at the science facility at Kuwait University. Over the next two months bombs exploded

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in front of the Pan American ticket office, the Ministry of the Interior, and the office of a US-owned life insurance company.

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The prospect of terrorism against Saudi Arabia increased significantly in 1987 following the Iranian-inspired clashes between Iranian pilgrims and Saudi security forces during the pilgrimage to Mecca. Iranian leaders publicly committed Iran to retaliation for the deaths of the Iranian pilgrims, to the overthrow of the ruling family, and to the end of Saudi dominance over the Islamic Holy Places in Arabia. Pro-Iranian extremists may have been responsible for the bombing of a Saudi bank in Paris in September.

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Bahrain was also the target of a terrorist plot.

#### Iran in Lebanon: Hizballah and the Hostages

Lebanon has been the scene of most terrorism perpetrated by groups supported by Iran. In 1987, Tehran continued to provide significant support to the extremist Shia Hizballah movement responsible for the kidnapping and detention of foreign hostages and has conducted terrorist attacks against Western interests, particularly the United States and France. Hizballah is not completely controlled by Iran, but Tehran has substantial influence over the group's activities and provides financial assistance as well as weapons and training:

- Following the arrest in mid-January 1987 of a terrorist important to Hizballah, two German nationals were abducted in Beirut. The terrorist, Muhammad Hammadi, who was arrested at Frankfurt Airport trying to smuggle liquid explosives into the country, had been one of the hijackers of TWA Flight 847 in June 1985.

- On 13 January, French journalist Roger Auque was abducted in Beirut. No group claimed his kidnapping. Auque was released, allegedly by the Revolutionary Justice Organization, in November.

- On 20 January, Church of England envoy Terry Waite was kidnapped in Beirut while on a mission to contact the terrorists holding several US hostages. No group has claimed his abduction.

- On 24 January, gunmen seized four professors, including three Americans, from the Beirut University College (BUC). A previously unknown group called the Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine (IJLP) claimed the kidnappings. The IJLP said in a communique released shortly after the abductions that it would murder all four hostages within a week if several hundred Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails were not freed and if Muhammad Hammadi were not released.

- Shia terrorists in Lebanon held five other US hostages at yearend, including Terry Anderson and David Sutherland. On Christmas Day 1987, a tape was released showing Anderson; in it he linked the hostages' fate to that of 17 Shia terrorists held in Kuwait.

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During the next few months, the press and sources of varying reliability reported threats to the hostages as well as promises of their imminent release. Press reports claimed that Terry Waite was accused of carrying a transmitter to his meeting with hostage holders, that he had been wounded in a shootout between rival hostage-taking factions, and that he was dead. Other reports alleged that all hostages had been moved to Tehran for trials on spy charges and that one of the BUC hostages was dying. At Christmas—following the releases in October and November of a South Korean, a German, and two French hostages—rumors circulated that Hizballah would release one or several hostages as a goodwill gesture. No hostages were released. The statements were probably intended by the hostage holders to increase pressure on the

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b3 hostages' governments in hopes of arranging a deal for ransom, which, according to press sources, had been paid in other hostage cases. [REDACTED] b3

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b3 The degree of Iranian involvement in the hostage cases has varied widely. Iran probably was not involved in the kidnappings of the Western hostages taken in early 1987. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Glase, an American journalist, was in Lebanon allegedly to interview Lebanese leaders as well as individuals involved in the TWA Flight 847 hijacking. Tehran was, however, apparently instrumental in arranging the releases of the two French hostages and a German hostage in November. [REDACTED]

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**In Search of America**

Tehran almost certainly considers sabotage and terrorism as important options in its confrontation with the United States in the Persian Gulf. In the Iranian view, Tehran and its Shia allies forced the withdrawal of US military forces from Lebanon, humiliating the United States and bringing into question the idea that Washington could use its military forces to influence political developments in the Middle East. Many Iranian leaders cite the US withdrawal as proof that terrorism can break US resolve. In 1987, as the United States began to implement its decision to protect Kuwaiti oil tankers and increase its military presence in the Persian Gulf, Iranian leaders and media drew parallels between events in Lebanon in 1983 and 1984—the bombings of the US Embassy and the Marine barracks—and current developments in the Persian Gulf. Iranian leaders also warned they would attack any Gulf port that offered support to the US military. In August, following the killing of Iranian pilgrims in Mecca during an Iranian-inspired riot, Tehran linked the United States to Saudi repressive tactics. The accusation was probably intended in part to provide additional justification for attacks against the United States. No Iranian-backed terrorist attacks were launched against specific US targets in 1987. [REDACTED]

**Other Iranian Activities**

[REDACTED] Tehran, however, apparently was not linked to the hijacking in Switzerland of an Air Afrique airliner on 24 July. The hijacker was a Lebanese male who claimed to be a member of Hizballah. Among his confused set of demands was the release of Muhammad Hammadi and other Hizballah-linked terrorists in jail in France. One Frenchman was murdered before the hijacker was overpowered. [REDACTED] b3

**Looking for Dissidents**

Iran, like Libya, has made suppression of regime opponents at home and abroad a focus of its terrorist activities. Iranian agents have hunted down political opponents in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Asia. In January, a defector who had been chief pilot for Iranian Assembly head Rafsanjani was shot in West Germany. Other Iranian defectors, including prominent dissidents, were murdered in Austria, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Turkey. All told, seven dissidents were murdered and at least two others were bombed or threatened in Europe last year. In July, pro-Khomeini terrorists—including members of the Revolutionary Guard, [REDACTED] b3—attacked facilities used by members of the Iranian opposition Mujahedin el-Khalq in Karachi and in Quetta, Pakistan. Three persons were killed in these attacks and many were injured. [REDACTED] b3

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